LESSONS FROM

# Klaus

*REMASTERED

BY

SAM CABANAC

AS AN ARTIST WHO CREATES A PERFORMANCE ON THE SCREEN, YOU MUST FOLLOW YOUR "GUT FEELING".
DON'T MIND THE JUDGMENT OF OTHERS.
ANIMATE WHAT'S REAL FOR YOU, AND YOUR PERFORMANCE WILL FEEL REAL!

SAM CABANAC

BE AWARE OF YOUR CHARACTERS' FULL STORY ARCS BEFORE STARTING YOUR SHOT.

THE CHARACTERS ARE ALWAYS AT A PRECISE STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT IN EVERY SHOT. IF THE SHOT IS IN THE MOVIE, IT MEANS IT SERVES A PURPOSE STORYWISE.

MAKE SURE TO KNOW WHAT STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT THE CHARACTERS ARE IN BEFORE COMING UP WITH AN ACTING CHOICE.

SAM CABANAC

AN ANIMATOR IS ALSO A GOOD SELLER. WHEN YOU PROPOSE SOMETHING TO THE DIRECTOR, MAKE SURE THE SHOT PROMISES SOMETHING GREAT (ESPECIALLY AT THE ROUGH STAGE).

IF YOU FEEL THE NEED TO EXPLAIN WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE SHOT, IT MEANS IT'S NOT THERE YET.

SAM CABANAC

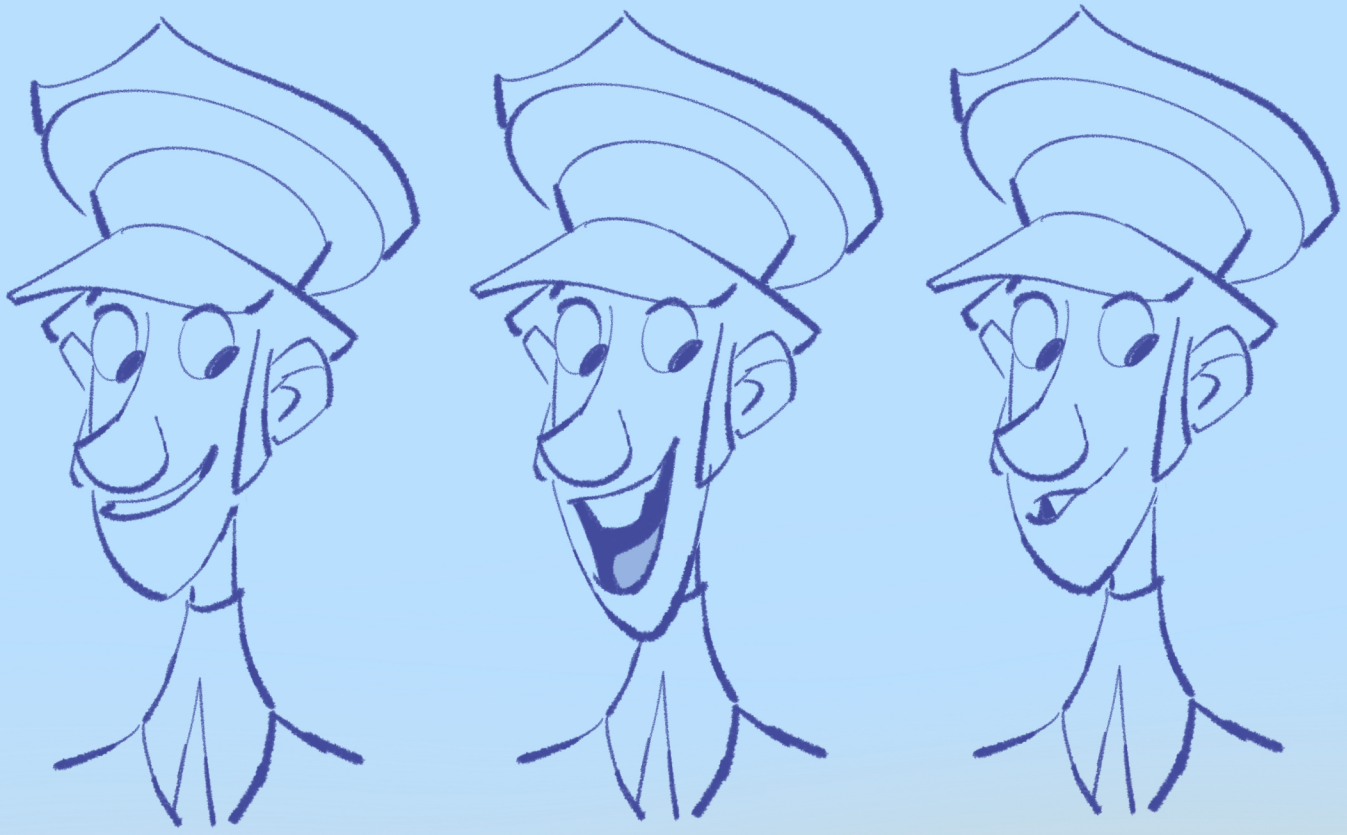
A THOUGHT...

# LIPSYNC

AS LONG AS YOU ANIMATE WITHIN YOUR CHARACTER'S SILHOUETTE,

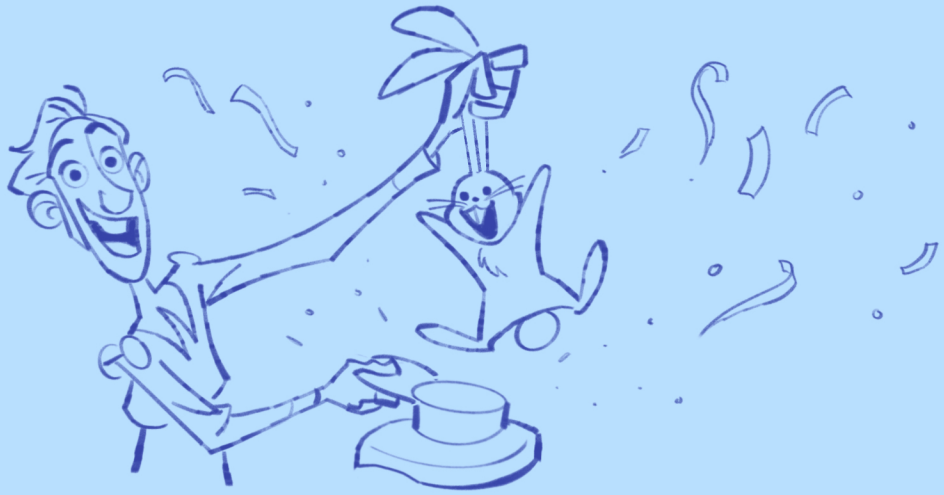
EXAMPLE:

YOU CAN CHANGE MOUTH SHAPES FROM ONE FRAME TO THE NEXT



IT'LL GENERATE A "POP FEELING" AND ADD TEXTURE AND RYTHM TO YOUR LIPSYNC.

SAM CABANAC



## ANIMATORS ARE ENTERTAINERS.

THE ANIMATION MEDIUM IS FREE AND FULL OF POSSIBILITIES.
BE CREATIVE IN YOUR ACTING AND ACTION CHOICES, IT'S ANIMATION!

PEOPLE AREN'T WATCHING AN ANIMATED SHOW/FILM FOR IT'S
"LIVE ACTION QUALITIES"...

THEY WANT TO BE ENTERTAINED BY WATCHING SOMETHING THEY CAN'T FIND
IN REAL LIFE. THEY WANT THE MAGIC TOUCH!

SAM
CABANAC

SOMETIMES, THE FEEDBACK ON YOUR SHOT CAN BE QUITE DIFFICULT TO HEAR (ESPECIALLY IF IT'S A PERSONAL FAVORITE OF YOURS).

KEEP IN MIND THAT, EVEN IF THE FEEDBACK IS RAW AND IT HURTS, IT'S NOT PERSONAL.

IT HELPS NOT TO SEE IT AS SLAP IN THE FACE, BUT AS A HELPING HAND.
WE ALL WANT WHAT'S BEST FOR THE PROJECT!

SAM CABANAC

YOU'LL NEVER HEAR IT ENOUGH, OFTEN IN ANIMATION,
"LESS IS MORE".

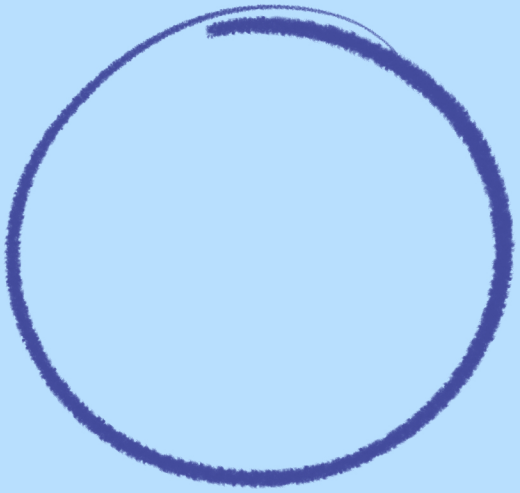
IT'S A MATTER OF CLARITY. THE "LESS" NUANCE AND DETAIL YOU PUT IN YOUR ANIMATION, THE "MORE" CLEAR IT IS TO UNDERSTAND.

*EXAMPLE:* A SIMPLE STATIC STAIR IN THE EYES CAN HAVE A HEAVIER EMOTIONAL IMPACT THAN A BIG TAKE OR A STRONG REACTION.

SAM
CABANAC

A THOUGHT...

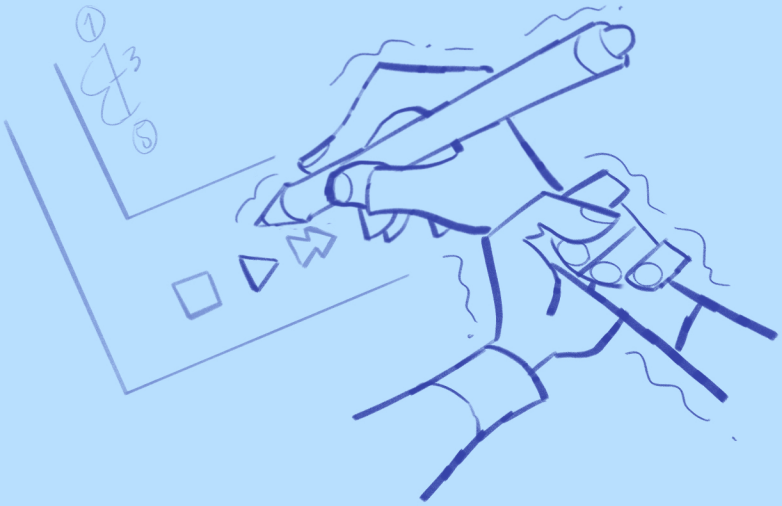
# DRAWING STYLE?



"TRY DRAWING A PERFECT CIRCLE," WHATEVER FLAWS ARE THERE, THAT'S YOUR STYLE.

-PICASSO-

SAM CABANAC



## WAIT BEFORE HITTING THE "PLAY" BUTTON.

THE MORE YOU WAIT BEFORE SEEING YOUR ANIMATION IN PLAYBACK, THE MORE YOU LEARN FROM IT WHEN YOU WATCH IT FOR THE FIRST TIME.

IF YOU WAIT FOR ALL OF YOUR KEYS (AND MAYBE A PORTION OF YOUR BREAKDOWNS) TO BE DONE BEFORE SEEING THE RESULT IN MOVEMENT, NOT ONLY WILL YOU LEARN A TON, BUT YOU GET THAT UNIQUE CHANCE TO BE YOUR OWN AUDIENCE!

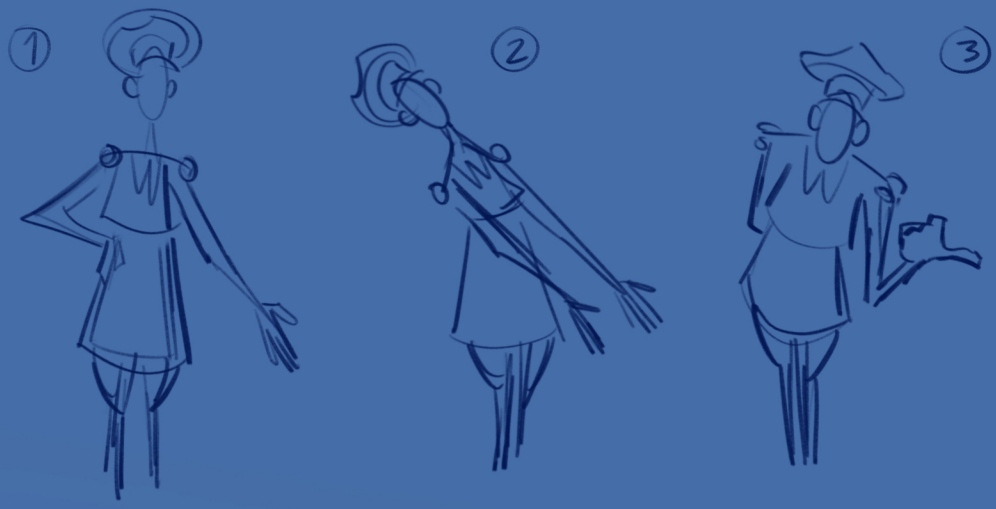
SAM CABANAC

"THE TRUTH IS ALWAYS IN THE BODY LANGUAGE"

-SERGIO PABLOS-

WHEN A CHARACTER IS CONFLICTED, AND YOU WANT TO CONVEY IT IN AN ENTERTAINING WAY, TRY EXPRESSING WHAT THE CHARACTER TRULY FEELS THROUGH HIS BODY LANGUAGE.

SAM CABANAC




YOU WILL HAVE BAD IDEAS AT FIRST.

THE BEST IDEAS OFTEN COME AFTER SOME TRIAL AND ERROR.
IT'S ESSENTIAL TO TRY DIFFERENT OPTIONS OF ACTING/MOVEMENTS FOR THE SAME SHOT. YOU WILL WANT TO TEST AND SEE "WHAT WOULD BE THE BEST FIT FOR THIS CHARACTER IN THIS MOMENT?"

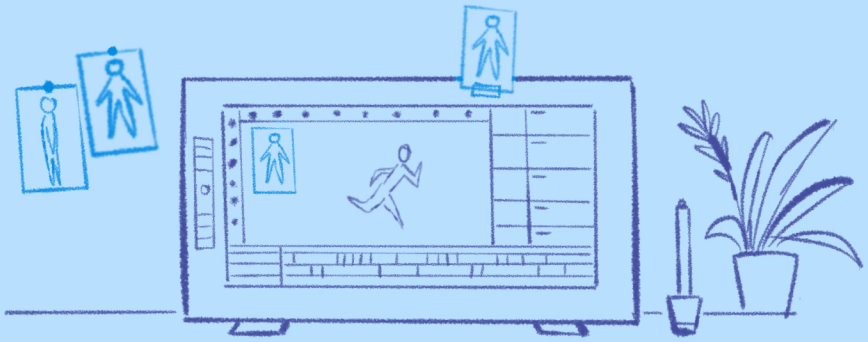
YOU WANT TO FLESH OUT AS MANY "UNFITTING" OR "GENERIC" OPTIONS AS FAST AS POSSIBLE THROUGH THUMBNAILING OR *FILMING YOURSELF.

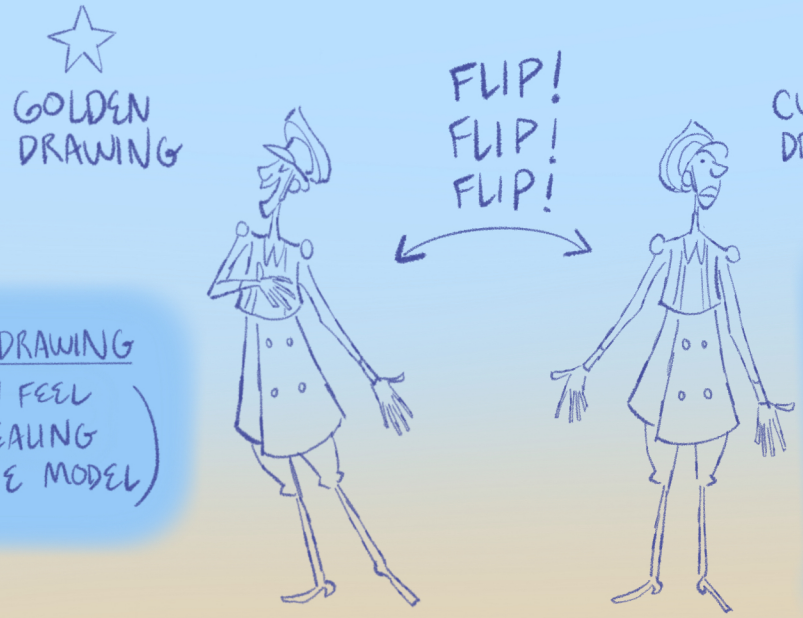
*EXAMPLE:* THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF DIFFERENT WAYS TO POINT AT SOMETHING. HOW WOULD YOUR CHARACTER DO IT UNIQUELY? IN WHAT STATE OF MIND IS YOUR CHARACTER WHEN POINTING?

A THOUGHT...

# HOW TO KEEP THE VOLUMES CONCISTENT AND THE CHARACTERS ON MODEL THROUGHOUT THE SHOT?

MAKE SURE TO ALWAYS HAVE THE ORIGINAL DESIGN REFERENCE **IN YOUR SCENE** AND/OR **RIGHT NEXT TO IT**






① FIND YOUR GOLDEN DRAWING
(DRAWING THAT YOU FEEL IS THE MOST APPEALING AND RESPECTS THE MODEL)

② GO BACK AND FORTH FLIPPIN' BETWEEN YOUR GOLDEN DRAWING AND CURRENT DRAWING TO BETTER SPOT THE POTENTIAL DIFFERENCES.

SAM CABANAC

"HOW TO RECOGNIZE A GOOD MENTOR" AND "WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT"?

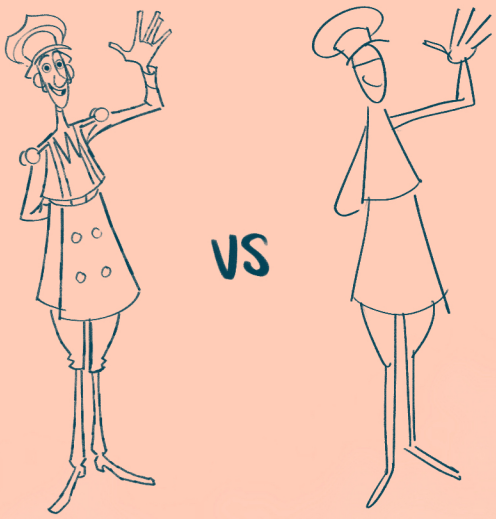
IF YOU WANT TO LEARN AND GET BETTER AT WHAT YOU'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT, FINDING YOURSELF A MENTOR HELPS A LOT.

MENTORS ARE INDIVIDUALS YOU CAN TRUST IN GUIDING YOU TOWARDS WHERE YOU WANT TO GO.

IMPORTANT! A GOOD MENTOR WON'T NECESSARY TELL YOU WANT YOU WANT TO HEAR BUT MOST LIKELY TELL YOU WHAT YOU NEED TO HEAR.

THE BEST MENTORS WON'T GIVE YOU THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTIONS, BUT THE TOOLS TO HELP YOU FIND YOUR OWN ANSWER.

SAM CABANAC



VS

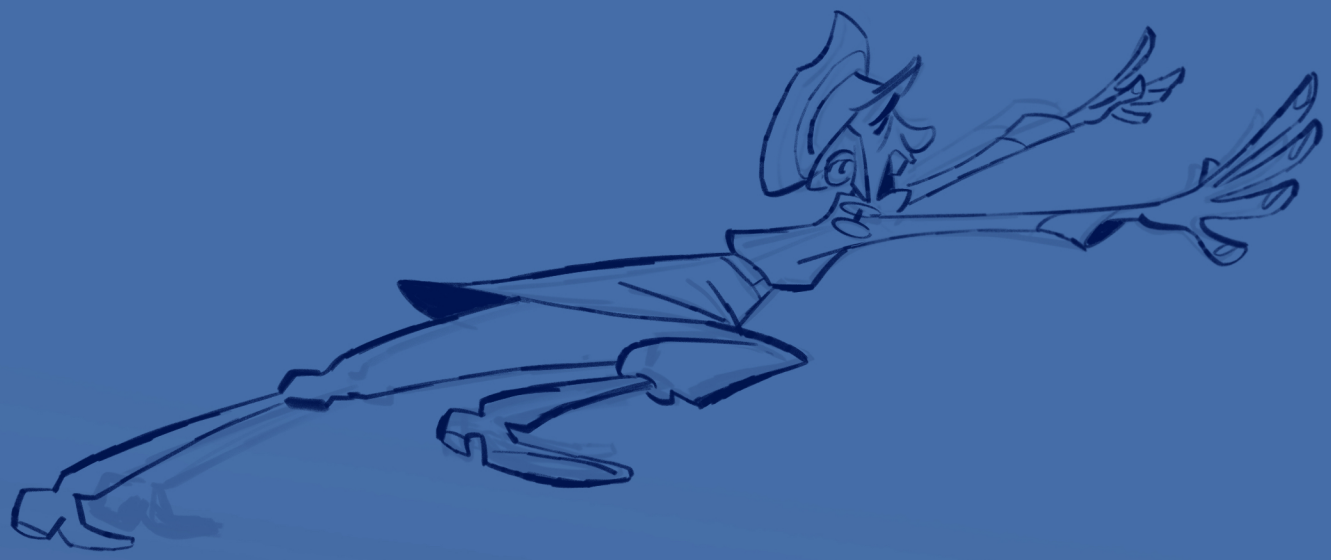
ROUGH!
BUT ALSO:
- CLEAR
- FAST
- MOVEMENT DRIVEN
(RATHER THEN DRAWING DRIVEN)

IN THE ROUGH STAGE, IN ORDER TO ENPHASISE ON CLARITY AND MAXIMISE YOUR TIME, IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO SIMPLIFY YOUR CHARACTER TO BASIC SHAPES.

"WHEN YOU ANIMATE A CHARACTER, TRY TO FIND HIS/HER ROUGH GRAPHIC SHAPE."

-JAMES BAXTER-

SAM CABANAC



# THE MOVEMENT DICTATES THE DRAWING!

IN OTHER WORDS, REFER TO THE MODEL SHEET, BUT NOT TOOO MUCH...
FEAR IS THE NUMBER ONE ENNEMY OF CREATIVITY.

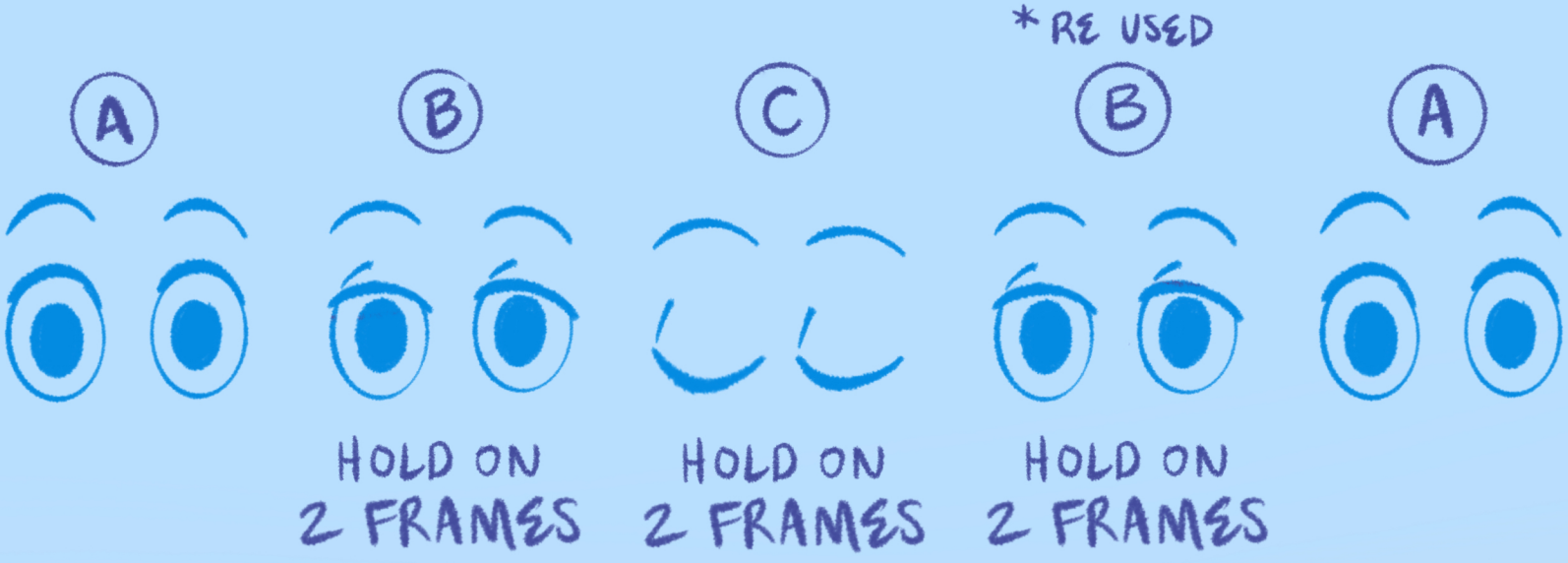
ANIMATE WILDLY! YOU'LL FIGURE OUT THE MODEL/DRAWING LATER.

SAM
CABANAC

A THOUGHT...

# AN EXAMPLE OF A BLINK

## "THE 6 FRAMES BLINK"




BLINKS ARE GREAT COMMUNICATION TOOLS!

THEY CAN EXPRESS:
- THOUGHT PROCESS
- TENSION BREAK
- FLIRTING

AND MUCH MORE!

SAM CABANAC

A GOOD DIRECTOR ISN'T SOMEONE WHO CRUSHES THE GOAL ONTO THE CREW, BUT SOMEONE WHO INSPIRES AND RALLIES THE TEAM TOWARDS THE HIGHER GOAL.

SAM CABANAC

WORKING WITH A TEAM OF TALENTED ARTISTS CAN BE INTIMIDATING AND AT SOME POINT YOU'LL PROBABLY FIND YOURSELF TRYING TO WORK LIKE SOMEONE ELSE (IT'S OKAY AND USUALY A GOOD WAY TO IMPROVE).

THAT BEING SAID, IT'S EASY TO GET STUCK AND STRESSED WHILE WORKING LIKE SOMEONE ELSE.

**WHAT YOU WANT IS TO FIND YOUR OWN WAY OF WORKING.**

EVERY ARTIST IS DIFFERENT, THEREFORE EVERY TECHNIQUE SHOULD BE DIFFERENT!

IT MIGHT NOT BE AS PRETTY AS OTHER ANIMATORS/ARTISTS YOU ADMIRE, BUT YOU'LL BE FASTER, CLEARER AND HAVE WAY MORE FUN.

SAM CABANAC

TOO OFTEN OUR NOSE IS ONLY ON OUR PART OF THE JOB. IT'S IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THAT EVERY DECISION YOU MAKE WILL HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE WHOLE PIPELINE BEFORE/AFTER YOU.

NEGLECTING AND NOT CARING ABOUT YOUR JOB WILL ONLY MAKE EVERYTHING WEAKER AND YOUR FELLOW TEAMMATES WILL SUFFER FROM THAT.

DO YOUR BEST FOR YOU AND FOR ALL THE OTHERS WHO CARE ABOUT THE PROJECT.

*KLAUS IS A PROJECT MADE OUT OF LOVE AND CARE FROM EVERYBODY ♥

WE (AUDIENCE) DON'T LIKE TO SEE A CHARACTER DO SOMETHING PERFECTLY.

A FLAWLESS CHARACTER WHO DOES EVERYTHING THE RIGHT WAY CAN BECOME VERY BORING VERY FAST.

GIVE PERSONALITY AND CHARM TO YOUR CHARACTER BY MAKING HIM/HER STRUGGLE A LITTLE BIT BEFORE ACHIEVING THE THING HE/SHE'S AFTER. IT'LL BE EASIER FOR PEOPLE TO RELATE TO YOUR CHARACTER AND HE/SHE WILL BECOME INSTANTLY MORE LIKABLE!

SAM CABANAC

IN AN ANIMATION TEAM THERE'S A LOT OF COMPETITION. BUT IT'S THE SHARING AND CARING FOR THE BIGGER PICTURE THAT MAKES IT A "HEALTHY COMPETITION".

SHARING YOUR KNOWLEDGE IS OFTEN ALSO MORE REWARDING THAN KEEPING IT TO YOURSELF.

YOU LEARN JUST AS MUCH WHEN YOU TEACH THAN WHEN YOU'RE TAUGHT BY SOMEONE ELSE. TRY IT!

SAM CABANAC

IF YOU WANT SOMETHING, GO GET IT!

IF YOU REALLY WANT TO ANIMATE ON THAT ONE SEQUENCE/SHOT IN PARTICULAR, GO ASK FOR IT. IF YOU'RE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT YOU HAVE TOO MUCH ON YOUR SHOULDERS, SAY IT...

THIS CONCEPT MIGHT SEEM SIMPLE BUT, AT TIMES, MIGHT BE INCREDIBLY HARD TO APPLY.

WE ALL HAVE OUR OWN CHALLENGES AND WE ALL HAVE DREAMS AND DESIRES. THE ONLY WAY TO GET CLOSER TO WHAT YOU WANT, IS TO ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES, DRINK A GLASS OF WATER AND GO AFTER IT!

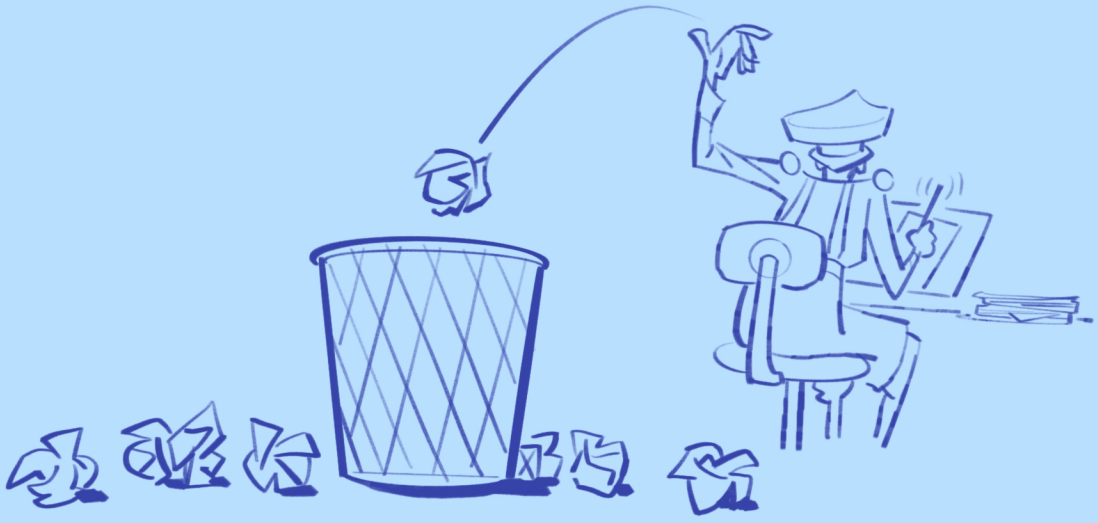
A THOUGHT...

# THE AUDIENCE WILL BE LOOKING AT THE EYES AND HANDS

AS HUMANS, SOME OF OUR FAVORITE WAYS OF COMMUNICATING ARE THROUGH OUR EYES AND HANDS.

IF YOUR IN A RUSH, PLACE YOUR ENERGY ON CLEARLY STAGING WHAT THE EYES AND HANDS ARE DOING.

SAM CABANAC



## IT'S OK TO FAIL.

YOU WANT TO LEARN WELL AND FAST?
FAIL WELL AND FAST.

THERE'S NO SECRET, FAILURE IS THE GREATEST TEACHER.

FAIL! FAIL! FAIL!
EVERYTIME YOU LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES AND BECOME BETTER!

* POSES TAKEN FROM AN ANIMATION BY THE GREAT YOSHI TAMURA

A QUALITY SHOT IS A SHOT WHERE EVERY SINGLE DRAWING IS ENTERTAINING.

I FOUND THAT THE MORE YOU FLIP (NOT "PLAYBACK") THROUGH YOUR SHOT, THE BETTER YOU SEE THE POTENTIAL FOR GOOD AND ENTERTAINING POSES.

SAM CABANAC

BIG AND HEAVY THINGS DON'T MOVE SLOWER THAN SMALL THINGS.
THEY JUST TAKE MORE DRAWINGS/FRAMES TO GET UP TO SPEED.

SAM CABANAC

WHEN THE CHARACTER IS ACTING, MAKE SURE YOU LEAVE ENOUGH TIME FOR THE "THINKING PROCESS" BEFORE REACTING TO THE INFORMATION/EVENT.

GIVE THE CHARACTER A GOOD 8 FRAMES TO REALISE WHAT'S BEING SAID/DONE AND THEN REACT.

SAM CABANAC

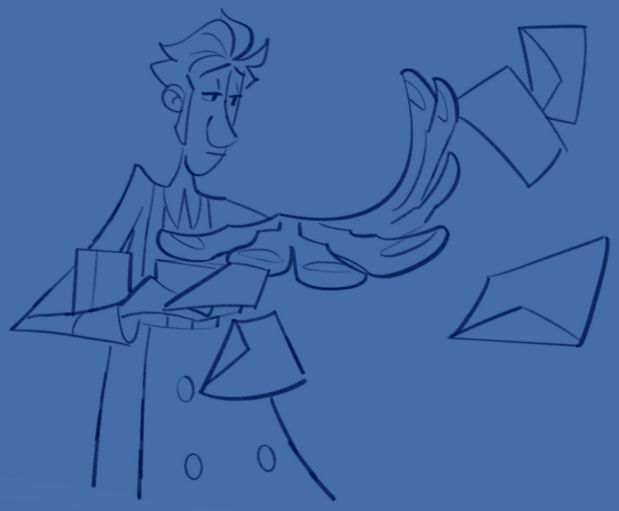
FOR THOSE WHO AREN'T FAMILIAR WITH IT, HERE'S A TECHNIQUE CALLED:

# "KISS"

## KEEP. IT. SIMPLE. STUPID.

OFTEN IN ANIMATION, WE ARE TEMPTED TO DO TOO MUCH, WHEN IN FACT WHAT THE SHOW/FILM NEEDS IS SIMPLE ACTIONS, CLEAR SHAPES AND GOOD EFFICIENT STORY TELLING.

SAM CABANAC



*DRAWING TAKEN FROM AN ANIMATION BY THE TALENTED MARC VALLS

MORPHS (LIKE THIS ONE) WORK BEST IF YOU PUT THEM ON ONE FRAME.

YOU KNOW YOUR MORPH DRAWING IS WORKING WHEN IS BECOMES INVISIBLE IN THE ACTION!

A THOUGHT...

# HOW TO DO A "MORPH" EFFECT

IT'S ALL ABOUT CREATING THE ILLUSION OF SPEED IN ONE DRAWING.

HAVE FUN!

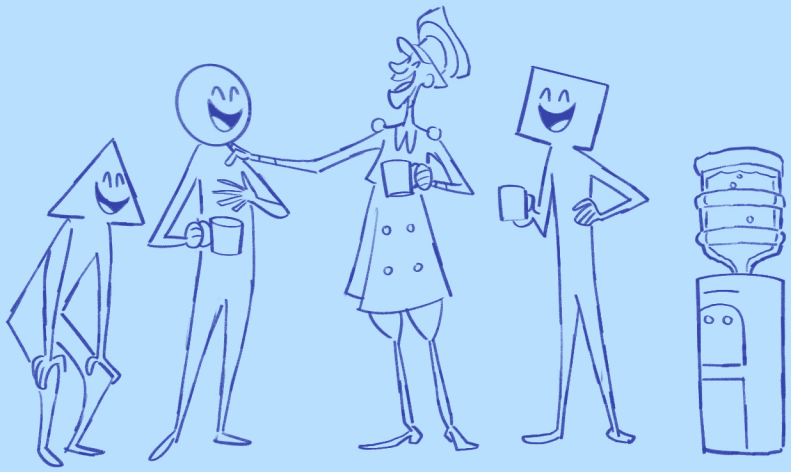
THE SINGLE DRAWING SHOULD BE TOUCHING DRAWING "A" AND "B"

THE "MORPHED" DRAWING SHOULD APPEAR ON ONE FRAME ONLY

THE UGLIER THE BETTER!

THAT'S WHY THEY SAY YOU SHOULD NEVER PAUSE ON AN ANIMATED FEATURE...

SAM CABANAC



IN THE STUDIO,
BE THE PERSON YOU'D LIKE TO HAVE AS A TEAM MEMBER.

BE KIND, DON'T BE SCARED TO BE VULNERABLE, SHARE, LAUGH, BE MENTALY PRESENT WHEN SOMEONE TALKS TO YOU, GO OUT WITH THE TEAM ONCE A WHILE (IF YOU CAN).

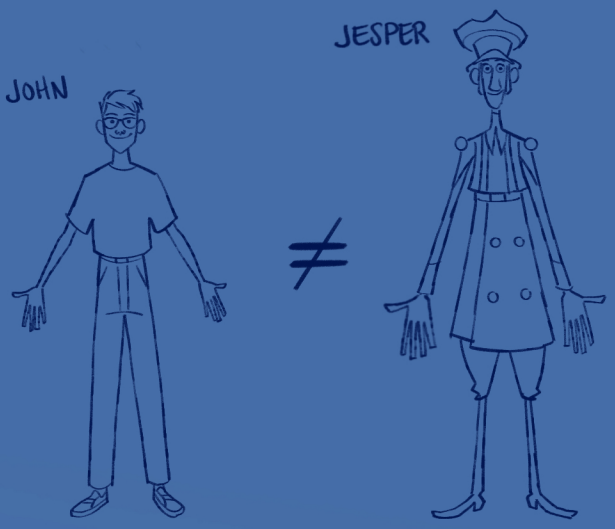
A SOLID TEAM CAN ACCOMPLISH SO MUCH MORE THAN AN INDIVIDUAL ALONE.

SAM
CABANAC

DO NOT UNDER ESTIMATE THE POWER OF WARMING UP BEFORE ATTACKING A SHOT.

LITTLE SKETCHES IN THE MORNING (EVEN IF YOU KNOW THE CHARACTER BY HEART!) IT'S LIKE STRETCHING UP BEFORE A BIG PHYSICAL EFFORT.

SAM CABANAC




## RESPECT THE CHARACTER YOU'RE ANIMATING.

STARTING WITH NOT FALLING IN LOVE WITH YOUR REFERENCE (ESPECIALLY WHEN FILMING YOURSELF).

USING REFERENCES CAN BE DANGEROUS, EVEN MORE WHEN IT'S YOUR OWN BODY. YOU'RE ANIMATING A UNIQUE CHARACTER WITH UNIQUE MANNERISM AND BODY LANGUAGE. NO MATTER WHAT YOUR REFERENCE IS, BE READY TO MAKE A LOT OF TRANSPOSITION IN ORDER TO RESPECT THE UNIQUENESS OF THE CHARACTER YOU'RE BRINGING TO LIFE.

A THOUGHT...

# RECEIVING FEEDBACK EFFECTIVELY

## (HOW I DO IT...)

I TRY FOLLOWING THESE 4 STEPS:

① ACTIVE LISTENNING

HEAR WHAT THE FEEDBACK IS AND TRY CAPTURING AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE. THE PERSON GIVING YOU FEEDBACK MIGHT EVEN ACT OUT WHAT HE/SHE/THEY WANT. WATCH CAREFULLY. ONLY NOTE KEY WORDS. ASK QUESTIONS!

② NOTE!

AFTER THE FULL FEEDBACK IS RECEIVED, TAKE TIME TO PROCESS THE WHOLE THING BY NOTING EVERYTHING YOU REMEMBER BASED ON YOUR KEY WORDS.

③ APPLY NOTES

APPLY THE NOTES!

TIPS: WHEN THE DIRECTOR SAYS SOMETHING LIKE "PUSH IT 10% MORE..." IT USUALLY MEANS PUSH IT "50% TO 80% MORE..."

④ GO BACK TO NOTES

ALWAYS DOUBLE CHECK YOUR NOTES AFTER YOU'RE DONE. YOU WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU DIDN'T FORGOT ONE BY MISTAKE.

SAM CABANAC

SHARING WHAT YOU LEARNED WITH OTHERS IS A GOOD WAY TO SEAL IT IN YOUR BRAIN!

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE THOUGHT PROCESS YOU GO THROUGH IN ORDER TO SIMPLIFY THE INFO SO THAT SOMEONE ELSE GETS IT.

THINK OF IT AS BREATHING... CAN YOU FUNCTION PROPERLY IF YOU KEEP IT ALL IN?

SAM CABANAC

HOPE
THIS
HELPS!
CHEERS!
SAM
CABANAC